

An Exorcism Charm Attributed to ‘Alī

In Ibn Ṭāwwūs’s *muhaj al-da‘wāt wa minhaj al-‘ibāda*

(The Spirit-Heart of Invocations and the Path of Worship)

Introduction, Critical Translation, Plates and Critical Notes

N. Wahid Azal © 2018

هو العلى العظيم

Abbreviations

MS1 = Illuminated Manuscript (Number 1) Iranian National Majlis Library (MS. no. 946-26).¹

MS2 = Manuscript (Number 2) Iranian National Majlis Library, (MS. no. 16515).²

MS3 = Manuscript (Number 3) Iranian National Majlis Library, (MS. no. 4356).³

MS4 = Manuscript (Number 4) Iranian National Majlis Library, (MS. no 12416).⁴

Printed edition = *muhaj al-da‘wāt wa minhaj al-‘ibāda* (Beirut: 1994), 20-1.⁵

Introduction

Among the genre of devotional literature **The Spirit-Heart of Invocations and the Path of Worship** (*muhaj al-da‘wāt wa minhaj al-‘ibāda*) compiled by Ibn Ṭāwwūs (d. 1266)⁶ stands out as perhaps one of the most interesting among Imāmī Shi‘i prayer manuals which have come down to us, particularly for its wealth of explicitly occult, theurgical and thaumaturgical material offered which are attributed directly to the Shi‘i infallibles, i.e. Muḥammad, Fāṭima and the twelve Imāms. While outside of the

Sufi orders the orthodox Sunnī establishment has often acted arbitrarily by uncritically dismissing or otherwise defining most of this arcana under the rubric of illicit (*ḥarām*) black magic or sorcery (*ṣiḥr*); the Imāmī Shi‘i literature -- and especially the authorities behind this literature (at least, that is, during the medieval and pre-modern periods)⁷ -- have instead maintained a far more nuanced, finessed and forthcoming approach. As the stature of the North African occult encyclopaedist Aḥmad al-Būnī (d. 1225) and his *shams al-ma‘ārif* (**The Sun of Gnos**) continues to grow in the esteem of Western specialists and lay enthusiasts alike, it is also high time to look more closely into the milieu of a few of al-Būnī’s near contemporaries among those Imāmī Shi‘i residing in the eastern Islamic lands who during al-Būnī’s own lifetime already possessed quite a rich and well established *occulture* of their own,⁸ and one outside of the specific milieu of Sufism.⁹ However, and as it turns out, increasingly it is also becoming clear that many of the popular items in the *rūḥanīya/‘ulum gharība* occult tradition of Islamic Sufism may in fact have their original sources within Imāmī Shi‘ism.¹⁰ This overall question not only requires but demands further scholarly inquiry for what it may reveal about the earliest source transmission(s) of the arcana into Islamic esotericism as a whole.

Be that as it may, even though the occult literature spawned by *Islamaic*¹¹ civilization stands as one of the vastest and most wide ranging -- albeit the bulk still remain in **MSS** -- nevertheless the specific written literature around occult formulas for exorcism in the form we have it here is somewhat rare. There is, of course, the orthodox sanctioned practice of *ruqīya* (رقية) that is both quite old as well as prevalent among Sunnīs: a practice which merely involves repeatedly reciting verses of the Qur’ān (usually the **Throne Verse**, 2:255) over a “possessed subject” without any further embellishments. But this is not the same thing as the practice delineated below that engages in an outright talismanic working by summoning

spiritual forces via incantations combined with magical sigils and the invocation of the names of angels -- one of whom (i.e. Metatron) is not even part of the exoteric scriptural pantheon of Islamic angelology -- all of which is quite verboten to mainstream orthodox sensibilities in Sunnī Islam. This does not mean that this particular style of practice has not been widespread, only that the specific textual material around this type of explicit exorcism formula in the available occult literature is somewhat sparse. Here we will offer a critical translation based on four Iranian Majlis **MSS** and a Beirut **Printed edition** of an exorcism charm (or talismanic operation-invocation) which has been attributed in Ibn Ṭāwwūs' *muhaj al-da'wāt* to the first Shi'ī Imām 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (d. 661).

Based on the previous item in this compilation (also attributed to 'Alī), the source for Ibn Ṭāwwūs' attribution is to one Shaykh 'Alī ibn 'Abdu'l-Ṣamad and a listed chain of narrators from him leading directly back to the first Imām. Shaykh 'Alī ibn 'Abdu'l-Ṣamad is 'Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn (or 'Alī) ibn 'Abdu'l-Ṣamad al-Tamīmī (early 12th century CE),¹² the scion of a house that produced several generations of notable Imāmī Shi'ī scholars, jurists and traditionists connected both to the closest companions (as well as sometimes directly to one or more of) the Twelver Shi'ī Imāms. Most of the occult material in the *muhaj al-da'wāt* would appear to originate in the latter's *kitāb muniyat al-dā'ī wa ghuniyat al-wā'ī* (**The Book of the Aspiration of the Crier/Summoning Invoker and the Affluence of the Conscious**),¹³ a work which although no longer existent was nevertheless cited by other Imāmī authorities contemporary with Ibn Ṭāwwūs as a major source text for this specific genre of devotional material (albeit sometimes under alternative titles).¹⁴

In **MSS 1, 3, 4** and the **Printed edition**, our item occurs as the ninth piece in the overall compilation.¹⁵ Without delineating the specific material to be used, the

text begins with a very brief, concise instruction, only stating that the charm should be inscribed and tightened over the right arm (presumably of the “possessed subject”).¹⁶ Usually this would suggest the use of some kind of fabric or parchment. No cycle of initial prayers¹⁷ or fumigations -- or even the optimum time (or place) for performing the operation; nor whether the subject (and their overseer) should make either the lesser or greater (*ghusl*) ablutions and be in the ritually prescribed state of purity (*ṭahāra*) -- is mentioned; but in the Islamic context these are usually givens. Nor is there any mention as to what material is necessary to make the inscription with (a detail one usually finds for operations in the textual material of the later Islamic occult tradition such as in al-Būnī) or for what length of time the inscription is to be worn. Following this, after the standard Islamic benediction formula, a series of conjuration words (عزائم، تعزيمات *‘azā’im, ta‘zīmāt*) are invoked, i.e. the magical *nomina barbarica* of Islamic occultism that are the incantation formulas consisting of words and phrases in crypto- or pseudo-Hebrew, Syriac and even Greek: opening incantations that compose about a quarter of the text.¹⁸ Quite interesting for this opening part, the chief archangel of Hekhalot-Kabbalistic lore and the **Book of Enoch**, i.e. Metatron, is directly invoked by name via these *nomina barbarica* as a celestial helper for the exorcism.¹⁹ Being a consummate piece of Qur’ānic theurgy, we have here five quotations from the Qur’ān, three of them in direct support of the overall command for the entity or entities to leave and depart the “possessed host.” After the final phrases of the *nomina barbarica* are given, there follows a final Qur’ānic quotation and then the utterance of the Hebrew Tetragrammaton (“*I Am that I Am*”) written in Arabic. This is followed by the names and genders of all the specific races of the malevolent entities that are to be banished from the “possessed subject,” after which comes the concluding benedictions of the prayer.

Following the prayer's conclusion, in each of these four **MSS** and the **Printed edition** we have different versions of the final telematic or hieratic spectacle letters (i.e. the sigilic lunettes) that form the actual magical device(s) for the exorcism operation (*amal*) to which the prayer or invocation acts as the activation. These devices are found within innumerable Islamic amulets and talismans, and in a variety of forms and appearances, but without any consensus about their meanings or their correspondences in the sources. Ibn Waḥshīya the Nabataean (d. 930-1 CE), author of the famed *kitāb shawq al-mustahām fī ma'arifa rumūz al-aqlām* (**The Book of Yearning Astonishment concerning Knowledge of the Ciphers of the Pens**),²⁰ designated these with the general term “pens” or “scripts” (i.e. *aqlām*, plural of the singular *qalam*, ‘pen’), a term especially popularized by him specifically in relation to these hieratic magical devices (even though he discusses a range of genuinely ancient alphabets including a few fictitious and magical ones as well) which henceforth became the predominant term of designation for these hieratic sigils in much of Islamic occult lore (and its sources) thereafter. In his *asrār-i-qāsimī* (**Qāsimī's Secrets**) Ḥusayn Vā'iz Kāshifī (d. 1504-05) labels the *aqlām* by the term “*falaqṭayr*” (فلق طير) which as a construct of the two Arabic words فلق (*falaq*) and طير (*ṭayr*) literally means “fowl of daybreak” or “cleaving bird.”²¹ Shaykhī and associated movements have termed them (especially in their better known grouping of nineteen forms)²² as the “letters of being” or “creation” (*hurūf al-kawnīya*, حروف الكونية).²³ Withal, among the arcana he is specifically credited in transmitting to the tradition, a **5x19** circular amulet known as the **Paradise of the Names** (*jannat al-asmā'*) is ascribed to 'Alī himself as its original author: a circular talisman in which nineteen versions of these *aqlām* always appear.²⁴ This attribution of the **Paradise of the Names** to 'Alī (together with its nineteen *aqlām*) is also made on the authority of Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazzālī (d. 1111) in a commentary popularly attributed to him.²⁵ In the third book

of the *shams al-ma‘ārif al-kubrā* (**The Great Sun of Gnosés**) al-Būnī designates the *aqlām* by the term *al-khanṣariyāt* (الخنصريات),²⁶ accords distant antiquity to their origins, and claims their transmission from the prophet-king Solomon and his sorcerer Āṣif ibn Birikhīyā.²⁷ He also alleges that the Sufi martyr of Baghdad Ḥusayn ibn Maṣṣūr al-Ḥallāj (d. 922) regularly operated with them and even composed eleven treatises regarding the subject. Its basic usage, he asserts, is for purposes of control or administration of the spiritual forces (*rūḥānīyāt*) and so conjuration (*sīmīyā*)²⁸ (and implicitly ‘expulsion’ as well). That said, the resemblance of these occult *aqlām* to a similar set of sigilic magical apparatuses expressly found in the “demotic spells” of the Greek Magical Papyri is uncanny.²⁹

Now, in **MS1** seven separate forms of these *aqlām* have been provided after the prayer which is followed underneath (except for **MS3** and the **Printed edition**) by undotted repeat letter ciphers.³⁰ In **MS2** we have five forms of these with **MS3**, **MS4** and the **Printed edition** each giving us six forms. Although there are similarities and close parallels between them, none of these sets of seven, six and five *aqlām* perfectly resemble or wholly align with one another from one **MS** to the next. Following the translation, each of these sets is reproduced according to the order of their **MS**.

For the translation, although we have not agreed with all elements of its reading, we have made **MS1** our chief text. The introductory rubrication of the **MSS** has been boldfaced. Transliterations from Arabic to English have been placed inside round brackets (). Variations within the readings between the **MSS** and the **Printed edition** (readings which have not been included in the main body of the translation) have instead been placed inside square brackets with ellipses [...] and, whenever necessary, endnoted. All the discrepancies and dissimilarities in the readings between the **MSS** and the **Printed edition** have likewise been noted with the

different readings given in the endnotes. Expanded readings as well as short explanations not requiring a note have been placed inside square brackets [] while alternative renditions of words have been placed between a slash /. The *nomina barbarica* have all been italicized as well as the Qur'ānic quotations (whose citations have been placed inside round brackets and boldfaced). Finally, we should mention that the translations from the Qur'ān below here are all our own.

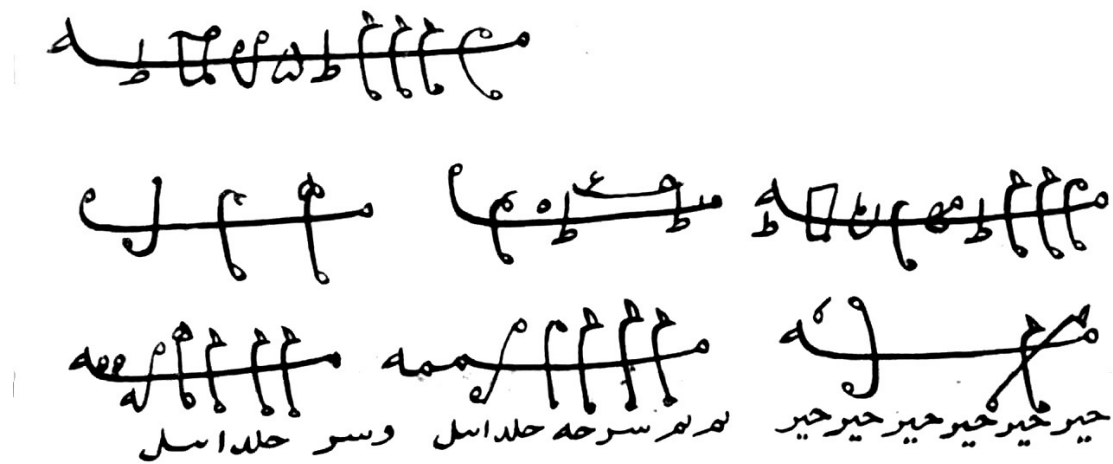
Translation

...Another incantation/charm (ḥirz) [...] ³¹ by the Commander of the Faithful
‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib. ³² Inscribe and tighten over the right arm [...]: ³³ In the
 Name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful! *ay kanūsh ay kanūsh*
 [...]³⁴ *arih shīsh*³⁵ *‘aṭabīṭabīlaj!*³⁶ O Metatron!³⁷ *qarbālasūn*³⁸ *sāwmā-sāmāsūmā*
*ṭīṭālūs ḥanṭūs masfaqīs masāṣa‘ūs aqraṭī‘ūs laṭfīkas!*³⁹ This! This!⁴⁰ “And thou
 wast not at the western side [of Mount Sina’i] when We ordained the
 Command/Cause to Moses, nor wast thou among the witnesses” (**Qur’ān 28:44**)!
 By the Power of God, get out of it, O thou accursed one, by the
 Tremendousness⁴¹ of the Lord of the Worlds! Get out of it, otherwise thou
 wilt become “among the imprisoned” (**Qur’ān 26:29**)! Get out, “for it is not thy
 place to wax arrogant therein! So get out, for thou art among the iniquitously vile”
 (**Qur’ān 7:13**)! Get out of it, indignant one, vanquished one, accursed one,
 “just as We cursed the people of the Sabbath, for verily the Command of God is
 accomplished” (**Qur’ān 4:47**)! Get out, O hoarded one(s)! O sūra! O sūra sūr!⁴²
 By the shielding/protective Name, O ṭaṭrūn! O ṭar‘ūn, O mar‘ūn! “Blessed be
 God, the best of all Creators” (**Qur’ān 23:14**)! O Ehye asher Ehye⁴³ Alive (ḥayyan),
 Peerless/Self-Subsistent (qayyūman)! By the Name written upon the
 forehead of [the archangel] Isrāfil [i.e. Raphael], leave/depart ye all out of

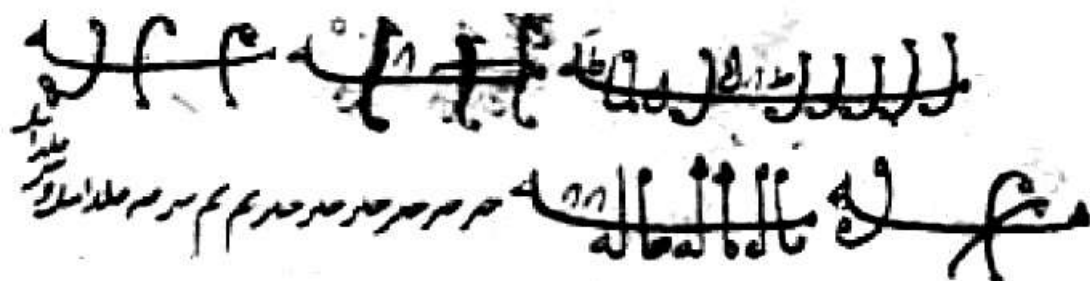
the possessor of this Script [or ‘owner of this, the Book’]: every male *jinn* and female *jinn*; and male demon and female demon; and male [subordinate] minion and female [subordinate] minion; and male black sorcerer and female black sorcerer; and male ghoul and female ghoul; and every misleading and misled deceiver of the son of Adam, for no power and no strength is there save in God the High, the Mighty; and the blessings of God be upon Muḥammad and His Family [...] ⁴⁴ in entirety!

The *aqlām*

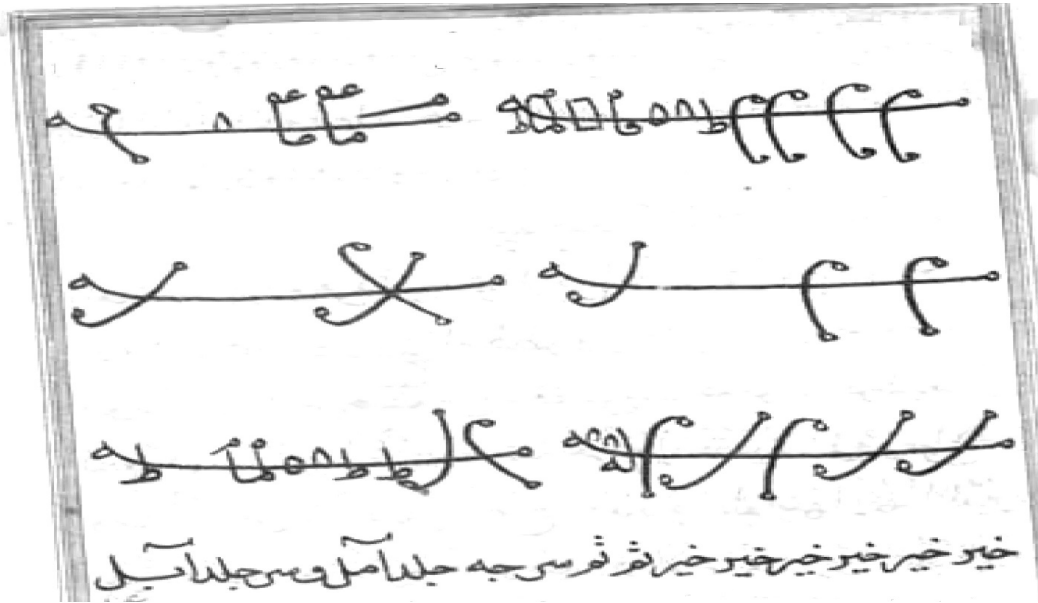
MS1



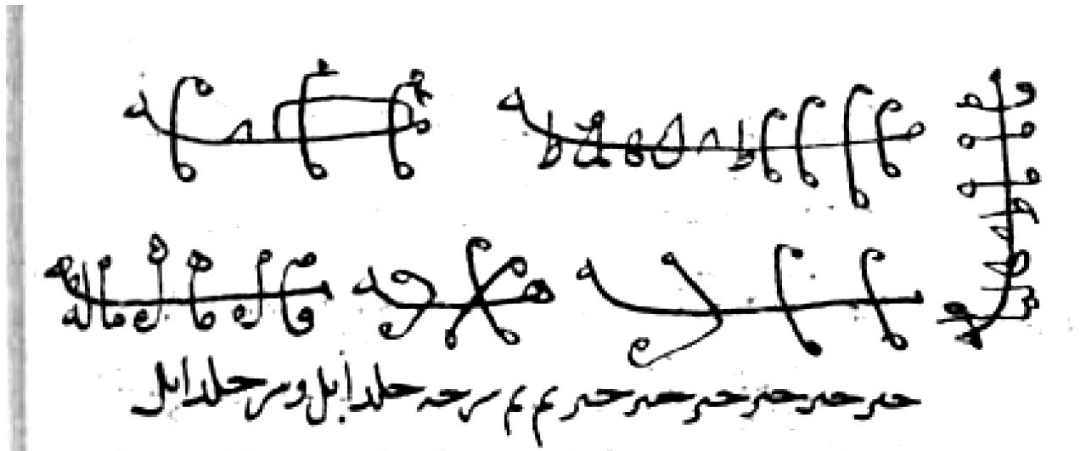
MS2



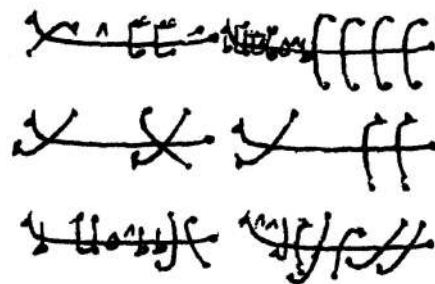
MS3



MS4



Printed edition



خير خير خير خير خير ثم سرجه حلدا مل وسر حلدا مل

The Texts

MS1

سَلْطَانُ خَفَتْ جَوْهَ الْأَرْدَةِ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ عَنِّي جَزْأً خَلَّيْنِ الْفَوْزِ
عَلَيْهِ طَابَتْ كُتُبُكَ وَتَبَدَّلَ الْعُضْدَيْنِ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

ای کنوش ای کنوش اده شیش عطی طیلح یا مظطرون
قربا لسون ساوما ساما سوما طیطا لوس حنطوس مسفقیس
مصاصعوس اقو طیعوس لطیفکس هذا هذا وما کنت بجانب الغر
از قضاوت ای طیطا معون بقوت برادر کار عالمیان بیرون روانان و اگر نه خواهی بود از
از قضاوت ای طیطا معون بقوت برادر کار عالمیان بیرون روانان و اگر نه خواهی بود از
المنجوبین اخرج منها فما يكون لك اذ تخرج منها فافا اخرج اناك
از قضاوت ای طیطا معون بقوت برادر کار عالمیان بیرون روانان و اگر نه خواهی بود از
من الصاعين اخرج منها مذومًا مذومًا ملعونًا كما لعنا اصحاب
از قضاوت ای طیطا معون بقوت برادر کار عالمیان بیرون روانان و اگر نه خواهی بود از
السبت وكان امر الله مفعولا اخرج يا ذا الخزون اخرج يا سورا
از قضاوت ای طیطا معون بقوت برادر کار عالمیان بیرون روانان و اگر نه خواهی بود از
ياسوراسور بالاسم الخزون يا ططرون طرعون مراعون تبارك الله
از قضاوت ای طیطا معون بقوت برادر کار عالمیان بیرون روانان و اگر نه خواهی بود از
احسن الخالقين يا هيا يا هيا شرا هيا حيا فومًا بالاسم المكنون على
از قضاوت ای طیطا معون بقوت برادر کار عالمیان بیرون روانان و اگر نه خواهی بود از
جبهة اسرافيل اظروا عن صاحب هذا الكتاب كل حي وحيته
از قضاوت ای طیطا معون بقوت برادر کار عالمیان بیرون روانان و اگر نه خواهی بود از
و شيطان وشيطان و تابع و تابع و ساحر و ساحر و غول و غول و كل
از قضاوت ای طیطا معون بقوت برادر کار عالمیان بیرون روانان و اگر نه خواهی بود از

اخافه الآردة الله عز وجل عني **حرز اخر ملولانا ومقدنا نالمير**
المؤمنين علي بن ابي طالب عليه الصلوة والسلام يكتب ويشد على
 العضد الايمن وهو بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم اي كنوش اي كنوش
 ادة شش عطيط سفنج يا مططرون قربا ليون ما وما ساما
 سوما طيطالوس حطوس مسفلس ما صعوس اقرطيعوس
 لطهنيكس هذا وما كنت بجانب الغرب اذ قضينا الى موسى الامر
 وما كنت من التاهدين اخرج بقدره الله منها انها للعين
 بقوة رب العالمين اخرج منها والا كنت من المسجونين
 اخرج منها ما يكون لك ان تكبر فيها فاخرج انك من
 الطاغين اخرج منها مذموما مدحورا ملعونا كمالا لعنا
 اصحاب السبت وكان امر الله مفعولا اخرج يا ذا الخزون
 يا سورا يا سودا سورا بالاسم الخزون يا ططردون طرعون
 مراعون تبارك الله احسن الخالقين يا هي يا هي اشرها حيا
 قوما بالاسم المكنوب على جهة اسرافيل اطرده واعصا
 هذا الكتاب كل جني وجنية وشيطان وشيطانية وتابع
 وتابعة وساير وسايرة وعول وعولة وكل متعيت
 وغايت يعث يا بن ادم ولا حول ولا قوة الا بالله العلي العظيم

رد بعثرة

واخرج

MS4

بن عباس فرأيت الرجل بعد سنة حين اللون مشرب الحمرة قال
 وما دعوت الله بهذا الدعاء وأنا أقيم الاشتيف ولا مهيئ الأبريت
 وما دخلت على سلطان خفت الأثر ده الله عز وجل عنى **حمار آخر**
لولا أنا أمير المؤمنين يكتب ويشد على بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم اى كنوش
 اى كنوش اى كنوش عطي طيطيل يا مططرون قمر بالسيون
 ما وما ساما سوما طيطا الوى خطوس مسعين ما صعدوس
 اف طعوس لطعوس هذا هذا وما كنت بجانب الغربى اذ قضينا الى
 موسى الامر وما كنت من الشاهدين اخرج بقدره الله منها ايها
 اللعين بغزة الله رب العالمين اخرج منها والا كنت من المسجونين
 اخرج منها فما يكون لك ان تكبر فيها فاخرج انك من الصاعين
 اخرج منها مذؤ ما مدحوا ملعوننا كما لعنا اصحاب البيت وكان
 امر الله مفعولا اخرج يا سورا يا سورا يا اسم المخزون يا ططرون
 طعونى اعون تبارك الله احسن الخالقين يا هييا يا هييا
 فيوما بالاسم المكتوب على جبهة اسرافيل اطر دواعن صاحب هذا
 الكتاب كل جنى وجنية وشيطان وشيطانة وتابع وتابعة وساكر وشاك
 ولا يفر ولا يغول ولا يغول ولا يغول ولا يغول ولا يغول ولا يغول
 حول لا قوة الا بالله العلى العظيم صلى الله على محمد وآله اجمعين

جوده م

حرز آخر لمولانا ومقتدانا أمير المؤمنين
علي بن أبي طالب (ع)

يكتب ويشد على العضد الأيمن وهو :

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ اي كنوش اي كنوش [كنوش خ ل] اره
شش عطيسفنج يا مظظرون قرتالسيون ما وما سوماس ما طيطسالوس
خيظوس مسفقلس ممصاصعوس الطيعوس لطيفوس اقرطيعوش لطفيكس

٢٠

في احراز الإمام علي (ع)

هذا هذا وما كنت بجانب الغربي إذ قضينا إلى موسى الأمر وما كنت من
الشاهدين أخرج بقدره الله منها أيها اللعين بقوة [بعزة] رب العالمين أخرج
منها وإلا كنت من المسجونين أخرج منها فما يكون لك أن تتكبر فيها
فاخرج إنك من الصاغرين أخرج منها مذموماً مدحوراً ملعوناً كما لعنا
أصحاب السبت وكان أمر الله مفعولاً أخرج يا ذا المخرزون أخرج يا سورا
يا سورا سور بالإسم المخرزون يا ططرون طرعون مراعون تبارك الله
أحسن الخالقين باهياً أشراً هياً قيوماً بالإسم المكتوب على جبهة
إسرافيل أطرؤوا عن صاحب هذا الكتاب كل جني وجنية وشيطان وشيطانة
وتابع وتابعة وساجر وساجرة وغول وغولة وكل متعبث وعابث يعيث بأبن
آدم ولا حول ولا قوة إلا بالله العلي العظيم وصلى الله على محمد وآله
أجمعين الطيبين الطاهرين .

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

خير خير خير خير خير ثم سرجه حلدا مل وسر حلدا بل تم

وكمل .

حرز آخر عن مولانا وعروتنا أمير المؤمنين
علي بن أبي طالب (ع)

اللَّهُمَّ بِتَالِقِ نُورِ بَهَاءِ عَرْشِكَ مِنْ أَعْدَائِي اسْتَتَرْتُ وَبَسْطَوَةِ الْجَبَرُوتِ

٢١

Notes

¹ This **MS**, originally copied in the year 1141 AH/1729 CE in Isfahan, does not possess either scribal pagination or modern **MS** foliation. The relevant pages occur as scans 21-23.

² Missing the *incipit* as well as the final page(s) and *explicit*, which is assumed to have been inclusive of the scribal colophon, this **MS** also does not possess either proper pagination or modern foliation. The relevant page(s) occurs at 56 of the **PDF**.

³ This **MS**, with the opening sleeve pencilled in with the number 1818 (which appears to be a cipher of some sort for the original owner of the **MS** rather than a date), also does not possess a proper scribal colophon. It has however been foliated, with our item occurring at **8b-9a**.

⁴ Copied on the ninth day of *jamadī al-ākhir* in the *hijrī* year 872 (corresponding to January 14, 1468 CE) and in Najaf, this **MS** has been foliated with our item occurring at **4b-5a**. It is obviously the oldest identifiable **MSS** among these. However, there are other problems with it which makes us hesitant at this time to grant it any status as a chief *stemma*.

⁵ The Beirut printed edition does not provide any source information regarding the **MSS** utilized as the basis for the edition of the overall text of the *muhaj al-daʿwāt*.

⁶ The biography offered by Etan Kohlberg in *A Medieval Muslim Scholar at Work: Ibn Ṭawūs and his Library* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1992), 3-17, still remains the most authoritative source on the life, times and writings of this great twelfth/thirteenth century CE polymath Imāmī Shīʿī scholar, jurist, traditionist, mystic and occultist who is held to have known the secret of the Greatest Name of God (*ism allāh al-aʿẓam*) as well as acclaimed for maintaining *supersensible* contact with the Hidden Imām during the period of the Greater Occultation (*ghayba al-kubrā*).

⁷ Although not a uniform trend, since at least the late Safavid period the modernists and those institutional ‘routinizers of charisma’ among the Twelver Shīʿī seminary establishment (*hawza*) have themselves also sometimes exhibited hostile tendencies towards this material, and one which is more akin to that of their orthodox Sunnī counterparts, than the far more positive reception accorded among earlier generations of Imāmīs. Often such hostility also comes from religious hyper-rationalists rather than traditionalists or even conservatives. This phenomenon is a crucially important topic of discussion -- with a range of historical, politico-ideological and sociological factors driving it -- and one which requires rigorous analytical and historical unpacking in its own right

⁸ And, to reiterate the point, whose transmissions and initiatic locus they attributed directly to the founder of Islam and his family. On this point, Moezzi’s highlights in *The Divine Guide in Early Shīʿism: The Sources of Esotericism in Islam* (trans.) David Streight (Albany: SUNY Press, 1993), *passim*, are quite apropos.

⁹ The Sufi *ṭurūq* who were then, as they still are now, the usual ‘go-to’ sources for such material.

¹⁰ See our introduction and notes to *The Prayer of the Forty Idrisid Names*, online https://www.academia.edu/35522793/The_Prayer_of_the_Forty_Idr%C4%ABsid_Names_.pdf (accessed 22 February 2018).

¹¹ *Islamaic* is a very helpful neologism (and one that both supersedes as well as complements Marshall Hodgson’s *Islamicate*): a neologism recently coined by friend and colleague Idris Samawi Hamid (Colorado State University, Department of Philosophy) in a forthcoming piece regarding Shaykh Aḥmad al-Aḥsāʾī (d. 1826). In **n35** of this piece Hamid states, “...The distinction between Islamic and *Islamaic* is analogous to the distinction between Hellenic and Hellenistic. Examples: ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib articulated an Islamic, but not an *Islamaic*, philosophy. Maimonides was an *Islamaic*, but not an

Islamic, philosopher. *Islamaic* philosophy appropriates and develops a non-Islamic (Aristotelian, Neoplatonic, etc.) heritage...” (my *italics*).

¹² Kohlberg, *ibid.*, 285.

¹³ Kohlberg, *ibid.*

¹⁴ See Kohlberg for the references, *ibid.*

¹⁵ **MS2** is arranged haphazardly and because its rubrications are not uniform, and pages are missing as well, its chronological arrangement is not exact and so does not appear to align with the others. Overall, in the standard arrangement, which three of our **MSS** and the **Printed edition** reflect, our item is preceded by four invocatory charms (*aḥrāz*) attributed to the Prophet Muḥammad (i.-iv.); then comes one attributed to his first wife Khadija (v.); this is followed by two attributed to Fāṭima (vi.-vii.) and then comes one by ‘Alī (viii.). Our piece immediately follows this last named item. The first, second, seventh and eighth items are preceded by *isnāds* (i.e. chains of narrators) before offering their actual devotional content. The chain of narrators for the previous piece before ours (which presumably applies to our piece as well) runs as follows: ‘Alī ‘Abd al-Ṣamad who heard it in a gathering of the townspeople from al-Thaqafī who heard it from one Yūsuf who heard it from al-Ḥasan ibn al-Walīd who heard it from ‘Amru ibn Muḥammad al-Shaybānī who received it from Ibrāhīm ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Kūfī who heard it from Muḥammad ibn Nufayl [or Faḍīl] ibn Ghazwān who got it from Ismā‘īl ibn Jubayr who heard it from al-Ḍaḥḥāk who got it from Ibn ‘Abbās who heard it directly from ‘Alī, **MS1**, scans 20-21; **MS2** omits the *isnād* and only mentions that it was originally transmitted by Ibn ‘Abbās; **MS3**, 8a; **MS4**, 4a; **Printed edition**, 19-20.

¹⁶ The right arm, we believe, symbolizes with the “Companions of the Right” (اصحاب اليمين) which in Twelver Shi‘i *ḥadīth* literature denotes the Imāms and their initiates (i.e. the legions of the ‘aql, viz. the Hiero-Intelligence/Nexal Consciousness, which are the people of the exoteric and the esoteric) as opposed to the “companions of the left” (اصحاب اليسار), that is, the enemies of the Imāms with their counter-initiates (i.e. the legions of *jahl*, viz. acosmic ignorance, which are the people of the exoteric alone). For this important distinction in Imāmī doctrine, see Moezzi’s *The Divine Guide in Early Shi‘ism*, esp. 88 and *passim*.

¹⁷ Most texts advise the performance of at least two *rak‘āt* (i.e. cycles of standing, bending and kneeling) before the commencement of most magical operations.

¹⁸ The most important early textual source on this topic in the whole tradition remains Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Ṭabasī’s (d. 1089/90) *al-shāmil fī al-baḥr al-kāmil fī al-dawr al-‘āmil fī uṣūl al-ta‘zīm wa-qawā‘id al-tanjīm* (**The Compendium regarding the Sea of Perfection concerning the Cycle of the Practitioner on the Principles of Conjuration and the Rules of Astrology**), see the **Princeton MS** (defective), online <http://arks.princeton.edu/ark:/88435/pv63g0318> (accessed 25 February 2018). This is the text we contend to be the originating source behind the names of the **Birhatīyah Conjuration Oath** as well as also the *nomina barbarica* of the longer *jaljalūtīyah* (*majora*) poem. Although biographical information on its author is sparse, it would appear he was a Shi‘i, whether this was as a Twelver Imāmī, Ismā‘ilī, Zaydī or *ghālī* is difficult to ascertain. See C.A. Storey’s brief citation of this work in *Persian Literature: A Bio-Bibliographical Survey*, Volume II, Part 3 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1977), 458. For the **Birhatīyah Conjuration Oath**, see our translation, online https://www.academia.edu/9799507/The_Birhat%C4%ABya_Conjuration_Oath_and_the_meaning_of_its_first_28_names (accessed 25 February 2018).

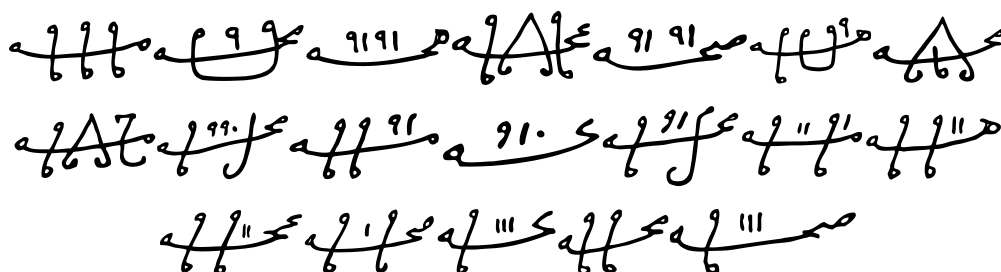
¹⁹ Although he only mentions in passing the incorporation of Metatron into Islamic angelology, see S.R. Birge’s valuable Ph.D thesis *Angels in Islam: A Commentary with Selected Translations of Jalāl al-Dīn Suyūṭī’s Al-Habā’ik fī akhbār al-malā’ik* (*The Arrangement of the Tradition about Angels*) (Edinburgh: The University of Edinburgh, 2009), online

<https://www.era.lib.ed.ac.uk/bitstream/handle/1842/4110/Burge2009.pdf> (accessed 25 February 2018). For Metatron, see Andrei A. Orlov's erudite *The Enoch-Metatron Tradition* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005). The presence of this figure of the "lesser Yahweh" (i.e. Yahoel) within *Islamaic* occult sources is one needing discussion in the scholarship and, moreover, that Metatron especially appears continually within some Shi'i devotional texts in itself is important topic of inquiry.

²⁰ See Joseph Hammer's English translation and edition of this text entitled *Ancient Alphabets and Hieroglyphic Characters Explained* (London: W. Bulmer and Co. Cleveland Row, 1806), online <https://archive.org/details/ancientalphabet00conggoog> (accessed 22 February 2018). It should be noted here that the **MS** Joseph Hammer utilized was defective, with the published text suffering from numerous errors and inaccuracies both in the Arabic edition as well as in the English translation: errors and inaccuracies that a new edition using better **MSS** would remedy. We say this on the basis of two **MSS** anonymously uploaded online a few years ago -- **MSS** presumably originating from the Egyptian National Library (no further identifiers given in either of the **PDFs**) -- by the *nom de plume* 'Abu Maryam' and originally linked from this blog <<http://www.manuscrit-spirituel.blogspot.com>> (now defunct). See also the **BnF** (Bibliothèque nationale of France) **MS Arabe 6805**, online <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b52501944j/f1.image.r=ibn%20wahshiyya> (accessed 23 February 2018); for Ibn Waḥshiyya himself, see Jaako Hämeen-Antilla *The Last Pagans of Iraq: Ibn Waḥshiyya and his Nabataean Agriculture* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2006); also see, the anonymous **Princeton MS (Islamic Manuscripts, Garret, no. 52b)**, not by Ibn Waḥshiyya, entitled 'Treatise on ancient, alchemical and magical alphabets', online <http://pudl.princeton.edu/objects/bg257f09h> (accessed 22 February 2018).

²¹ *Asrār-i-Qāsimī* (Bombay: lithograph, 1885), 13, online <https://archive.org/details/AsrarIQasimi> (accessed 22 February 2018). While this particular term for the *aqlām* is one apparently originating with Kāshifī himself (or, rather, the occultist circles he was associated with), it is nevertheless quite an interesting terminological insight on his part (or from wherever or whoever he first derived it) because these devices do indeed resemble something analogous to bird hieroglyphs. In any case, these "pens" or "scripts" are to be taken as hieratic in their nature; and for all the vague and contradictory discussion around them throughout the sources, everyone is more or less in agreement about this general point.

²² Where each of these nineteen forms are meant to represent (or correspond as) the telematic forms of each of the nineteen letters of the *bismillāh* from ب to the final م of الرحيم. These nineteen forms are as follows:



²³ See Siyyid 'Alī Muḥammad Shīrāzī, the Bāb, *tafsīr sūrah al-ḥamd*, online <http://www.h-net.org/~bahai/areprint/bab/G-L/hamd/hamd.htm> (accessed 23 February 2018), 148. For the circular talisman in question, see http://bahai-library.com/images/b/bab_daira_haykal_1_big.jpg (accessed 26 February 2018).

²⁴ For an example of the *jannat al-asmā'* circular talisman, see online <http://14adiye.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/L4GZA.jpg> (accessed 22 February 2018).

²⁵ See **Digital Occult Manuscripts, MS 'Sherh Janatu Al-Asma'** <http://digitaloccultmanuscripts.blogspot.de/2009/05/sherh-janatu-al-asma.html> (accessed 23 February 2018). We also possess an **Iranian National Majlis Library MS** of the *Dīwān of 'Alī* (**MS. no. 27752-10396**) which contains this commentary at its conclusion but which attributes the actual commentary (after the preliminary excursus) directly to 'Alī himself.

²⁶ A term of uncertain origin but one sounding distinctly pseudo-Syriac or even Coptic. In Muslim Africa, especially in the Maghrib and Egypt, this is the term they are predominantly known by. An anonymous treatise using this specific term of *al-khanfaṭariyāt* attributes the origins of these *aqlām* to Hermes Trismegistus, see online http://issuu-download.tiny-tools.com/print.php?doc_id=170623095610-5e994c3178d4f724522636a854177a1e (accessed 23 February 2018).

²⁷ Printed edition (Beirut: *mu'assasa al-nūr lil-maṭbū'āt*, 1420 AH/2000 CE), see esp. chapter 37, 415-18.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ See (ed.) Hans Dieter Betz *The Greek Magical Papyri Including the Demotic Spells* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986), esp. 17, 18, 23, 71, 88, 107, 122, 129, 130, 134, 140, 141, 142, 143, 149, 150, 195, 253, 255, 268, 270, 273, 274, 283, 286, 289, 295, 311, 318, 319 and 321. The resemblance of these *aqlām* also to the veves in the Afro-Caribbean Voudon tradition should likewise be noted.

³⁰ These repeat letter ciphers (undotted in the **MSS** except for **MS3**) have been given as,

خير خير خير خير خير خير ثم ثم

These are then followed by the non-repeat letter ciphers:

سرجه حلدا مل وسر حلدا بل

MSS 1 and 2 have it as,

سرجه حلدا مل وسر حلدا مل

MS4 has it as,

سرجه حلدا بل وسر حلدا بل

In both **MSS** and the **Printed edition** the first set of repeat ciphers is composed of 22 letters with the second (non-repeat) set consisting of 19, giving us a total number of 41 letters for the whole of the final exorcism formula immediately underneath the *aqlām*. Contrary to the **MSS**, the **Printed edition** then concludes with *تم و كمل* ("done and complete"). After *بل*, all of the **MSS** (as well as the **Printed edition**) offer the next item of the compilation which is another devotional piece attributed to 'Alī. For the repeat letter ciphers, see Lloyd Graham *Qur'ānic Spell-ing: Disconnected Letter Series in Islamic Talismans*, online

https://www.academia.edu/516626/Qur%CA%BE%C4%81nic_Spell-ing_Disconnected_Letter_Series_in_Islamic_Talismans (accessed 24 February 2018).

³¹ **MS3** and the printed edition both have here *لمولنا و مقتدانا* ("by our master and our illimitable chief").

³² **MSS 2 and 3** include here the blessings, with the first giving it as *صلوات الله و سلام عليه* ("the blessings of God and salutations be upon him") with the second as *عليه الصلوات و السلام* ("upon him be blessings and salutations"). **MSS 1 and 4** omit it with the printed edition giving it in the notational formula within parentheses, i.e. (ع).

³³ MS3 and the Printed edition add here وهو (“and this”). All four of the Iranian Majlis MSS (with three of them rubricating this whole line in red) as well as the Printed edition begin with this opening line and preliminary instruction. Unlike the others, MS2 offers this introductory line in Persian and only rubricates in red the first two words “another charm” (حرز آخر).

³⁴ The printed edition adds in brackets here *Kanwīsh Kh-L* (كنویش خ ل) but this does not occur in any of the MSS.

³⁵ MSS 3, 4 and the Printed edition render this as شش without a ي between the two ش.

³⁶ (عطيطسفنچ). The Printed edition has ‘aṭītasfanaj or ‘aṭītsafanaj. MS2 is the same as MS1 and ours above. MS3 has it as in the Printed edition. MS4 appears to have ‘aṭībṭibalah (عطيطسفلج) or ‘aṭībṭilaj (عطيطسفلج).

³⁷ MS1 renders it as مظطرون, MS2 as مظطرون with the Printed edition as مظطرون. The other two MSS have it correctly as مظطرون.

³⁸ MS2 قرئالسون (*qartālasūn*); MS3 قرئالسیون (*qarbālasīyūn*); MS4 قرئالسیون (*qaryālasīyūn*); Printed edition قرئالسیون (*qartālasīyūn*).

³⁹ MS1 (as above); MS2 ساوماسامسوماطيطالوس حنطوس مسفقيس مسا صعوس اقريطعوس لطفيكس (*māwmā-sūmā sarmā ṭīṭālūs khabṭūs masfaqīs masā ṣa‘ūs aqraṭī‘ūsh laṭfīkas*); MS3 ساوماسامسوماطيطالوس حنطوس مسفقيس مسا صعوس اقريطعوس لطفيكس (*māwmā-sāmā sūmā ṭīṭālūs ḥanṭūs masfaqalas masā ṣa‘ūs aqraṭī‘ūs laṭfīkas*); MS4 ساوماسامسوماطيطالوس حنطوس مسفقين مسا صعوس اقريطعوس لطعكس (*māwmā-sāmā sūmā ṭīṭlā’alūs ḥanṭūs masfaqan masā ṣa‘ūs aqraṭa‘ūs laṭ‘akas*); Printed edition ما وما سوماس ما طيطسالوس خيطوس مسفقلس مسا صوماس الطيعوس لطيفوس اقريطعوس لطفيكس (*mā wamā sūmās mā ṭīṭsālūs khayṭūs masfaqalas mamsā ṣa‘ūs alṭī‘ūs laṭīfūs aqraṭī‘ūsh laṭfīkas*).

⁴⁰ All of the MSS and the Printed edition except for MS3 have repeated هذا.

⁴¹ MSS 2 and 3 here have it rendered as بِقُوَّةٍ (“by the strength” or “potency”). The Printed edition has بِقُوَّةٍ and then placed بِعَظَمَةٍ (“by the tremendousness” or “grandiosity”) inside brackets right next to it.

⁴² MS1 يا سورا يا سورا سور; MS2 يا سورا يا سورا سور; MS3 يا سورا يا سورا سور; MS4 يا سورا يا سورا سور; Printed edition يا سورا يا سورا سور.

⁴³ MS1 يا هيتا يا هيتا شرا هيتا; MS2 يا هيتا يا هيتا شرا هيتا; MS3 يا هيتا يا هيتا شرا هيتا; MS4 يا هيتا يا هيتا شرا هيتا; Printed edition باهيتا اشتر اهيتا.

⁴⁴ MS3 and the Printed edition include here الطيبين الطاهرين (“the Goodly, the Pure”); MSS 1, 2, and 4 do not.